

COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

TOPIC Altenburg Airfield

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DATE OF CONTENT 20 to 26 April 1951

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DATE PREPARED 5 June 1951

REFERENCES

PAGES 2 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1 - two sketches on ditto

REMARKS

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1. Altenburg airfield was observed from all sides on 24 April 1951, between 6 and 10 p.m. The only building seen at the field was a hangar, about 100 meters long and divided in the middle. It was located on the eastern edge of the field. Twenty-six twin-engine transports, of the type previously seen at the field, were counted on the landing field in front of and south of the hangar. (1) A twin-engine plane took off at 6 p.m. and circled over Ehrenhain (N 51/K 37) until 6:45 p.m. The noise of machine guns was heard from Ehrenhain. At 6:45 p.m., the plane dropped 11 containers suspended from parachutes over the northern half of the landing field. Then it made another local flight and released 10 more parachutes at 6:50 p.m. The parachutes fell on the northern edge of the field and in the woods near the firing range. The plane landed at 7:05 p.m. (2)
2. A searchlight mounted on the roof of the hangar illuminated the landing field. No other lighting facilities were seen. A radio mast about 10 meters high, a radio truck, and a sentry with a dog were in the north-eastern corner of the field. A telephone line led from the installation to the airfield.
3. Improvement at the field was not completed. A path through the woods which led via Wilchwitz and Kraschwitz was recently used as an approach road to the field. Construction sites with warning signs of Bauunion-South Firm were seen on the northern edge of the field. Temporary buildings for workers were erected near Kraschwitz. A drainage system to the north was under construction on the western edge of the field. A taxiway extended along the eastern and northern edges of the field.
4. The sentry at the main entrance to the field wore a gray-green army uniform, blue epaulets with blue pipings and a badge with two crossed propellers, and blue collar patches. An officer who was seen leaving the komendantura building wore a gray-green uniform, blue-bordered golden epaulets, four stars, and a blue ribbon around his cap.

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5. The field was repeatedly observed between 20 and 26 April. Twenty-seven to 29 twin-engine transports were counted in the dispersal area on the eastern edge of the field. The planes were equipped with radial engines, four round windows on each side, and a door on the right side. No weapons were observed. One plane had a plexiglass cupola on the upper side of the fuselage behind the cockpit. Two iron bars, probably bomb racks, were seen on another plane between the landing gear under the fuselage. (3)

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6. Only soldiers with blue service color were seen entering and leaving the field. No staff officers were seen, only officers up to captain. About 25 percent of the EM had closely cropped hair. A group of about 50 German laborers including firemen, electricians, fitters, and char-women were employed at the field. They were supervised by a German named Franz, (fnu). Within this group there was allegedly a technical maintenance detail of about 12 men who were apparently employed in the repair hangar. Only Soviet soldiers have been seen doing maintenance work on aircraft.

7. [redacted] conversion of a hangar into a theater adequate for cultural performances, [redacted] hangar and the adjacent repair hangar were 48 x 72 meters each. [redacted] up to six twin-engine aircraft could be repaired in the repair hangar at the same time.

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8. The radio mast was again seen in the northeastern extension of the runway. The mast, about 17 meters high, had four bulges at each of which four guy wires were fitted. It was about 10 cm in diameter at the bottom and tapered toward each bulge. A box about 15 cm high with vertical ribs was fitted on the lower section of the mast. The thicker parts on the wires were apparently stretching rings (Spannringe), definitely not insulators. Six wires fitted on the masthead at a larger angle were less tightly drawn than the other wires. A light double cable led from the foot of the mast to the settlement. Two planks for radio trucks lay next to the mast. (4)

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[redacted] Comments.

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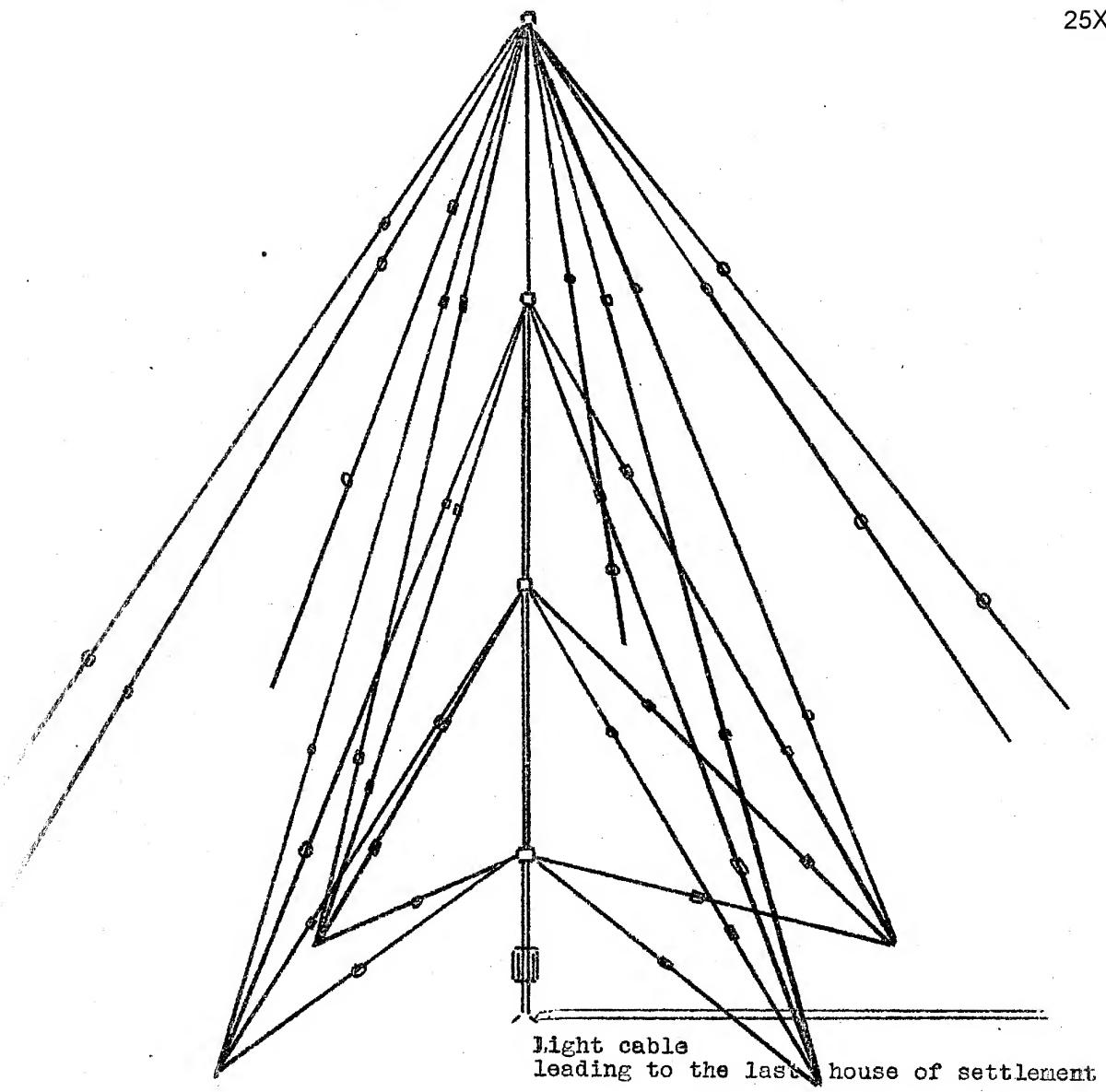
- (1) The number and type of aircraft, LI-12s, indicate that the occupation by an air transport regiment has not been changed.
- (2) It has been repeatedly observed that paracans have been released. The air transport regiment has frequently practiced together with army units. Parachuting and the dropping of containers suspended from parachutes has been practiced.
- (3) No information has been received [redacted] indicating that bombs or containers can be suspended under the fuselage of LI-2s.
- (4) For sketch of mast, see Annex. According to the description, the mast is a landing beacon in the extension of the runway.

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Radio Mast Seen at Altenburg Airfield

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Top View

